

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00
AID-05 /088 W
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R 011437Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 513
INFO: RUFHRS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 508
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4234

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR SP MT
SUBJECT: SPAIN AND MALTA

REF: MADRID 1703, VALLETTA 563

1. THE SPANISH MISSION TO MALTA (REFTELS) HAD AS ITS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE THE ACQUISITION OF INFORMATION ON THE REAL AND SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPANISH TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION, ACCORDING TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR FOR SOUTHERN EUROPE (ALVARO DE CASTILLA). SPAIN IS ECONOMICALLY UNABLE TO PROVIDE TRUE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, BUT IT DOES WANT TO COOPERATE TO THE EXTENT IT CAN, HE ADDED; THE PROBLEM SO FAR HAS BEEN MINTOFF'S DISORGANIZED APPROACH, IN WHICH HE INVITES PLURAL COUNTRIES TO HELP OUT ON THE SAME PROJECT, AND OFTEN COMES UP WITH PROJECTS THAT ARE COMPLETELY UNFEASIBLE.

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2. CASTILLA SAID THE SPANISH MISSION HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH TWO GERMAN OPERATIONS THERE, BOTH OF WHICH (A PANTS FACTORY AND A TELEPHONE PLANT) INVOLVED THE SHIPPING IN OF ALL MATERIAL FOR ASSEMBLY BY MALTESE WORKERS AND RE-EXPORT. MALTESE LABOR, HE SAID, WAS BOTH WELL-TRAINED AND SUBJECT TO "IRON DISCIPLINE", WHICH COUPLED WITH ITS LOW WAGES MADE SUCH OPERATIONS ATTRACTIVE. (HE DID NOT CITE,

HOWEVER, ANY SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES THE MISSION HAD IDENTIFIED FOR FOLLOW-UP.)

3. THE MISSION HAD ALSO BEEN IMPRESSED, SAID CASTILLA, WITH MINTOFF'S COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE ISLAND. WHEN ITS MEMBERS MET WITH HIM AT THE CLOSE OF THEIR THREE-WEEK STAY THERE, HE REVEALED HIMSELF AS FULLY INFORMED ON EVEN THE DETAILS OF WHAT THEY HAD BEEN DOING. (HE FURTHER IMPRESSED THE SUITED-AND-TIED SPANIARDS BY RECEIVING THEM IN A FLOWERY PINK SPORT SHIRT.)

4. ON A BROADER PLANE, CASTILLA SAID SPAIN ACCEPTED MALTESE NEUTRALITY AS THE "LESSER EVIL--BETTER THAT NO ONE GAVE ACCESS TO ITS MILITARY FACILITIES THAN THAT THE SOVIETS DO". THE PARTICIPATION OF LIBYA AND ALGERIA IN THE NEUTRALITY-GUARANTEES WAS WORRISOME BECAUSE OF THEIR IDEOLOGICAL POSTURES, HE SAID, BUT THE INCLUSION OF TUNISIA SHOULD, DESPITE ITS RELATIVE WEAKNESS, HELP TO MODERATE THE MIX ON THE SOUTHERN SHORE. STABLER

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